THE DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPHET ﷺ BY TIRMITHI

Extracted from

The Cure

SAHIH-SHEFA

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The Description of the Prophet ﷺ by Tirmithi

The essence of this work has been extracted from the collection of Prophetic Quotations by the famous compiler and transmitter Imam Tirmithi

Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ Genealogy

His parents were Aminah daughter of Wahb and Abdullah son of Abd Al Muttalib, son of Hashim, son of Abd Manaf, son of Ksay, son of Kilab, son of Murrah, son of Ka'b, son of Lu'ayy, son of Ghalib, son of Fihr, son of Malik, son of Nadir, son of Kinanah, son of Khuzayma, son of Mudrikah, son of Ilyas, son of Mudar, son of Nizar, son of Ma'ad, son of Adnan, up to Prophet Ishmael, son of Prophet Abraham, to Prophet Adam. Between Prophet Abraham and Prophet Adam there were approximately 30 generations amongst whom were prophets. Peace be upon all the prophets.

The Prophet's ﷺ Noble Character, Nature and Physique

No written description of our beloved Prophet ﷺ can ever do justice to his exceptional beauty. Lady Ayesha, the wife of the Prophet, may Allah be pleased with her, described him as being more handsome than Prophet Joseph, whose handsomeness caused the wives of pharaoh's ministers to gasp when they caught sight of him as they ate causing their knives to slip and injure their hands. She said, "If the friends of Zulayka had seen the blessed face of the Messenger of Allah ﷺ they would have cut their hearts instead of their hands!"

The Prophet's ﷺ Resemblance to Abraham

The Prophet ﷺ said, "The prophets were shown to me. I saw Moses, peace be upon him, he had a slender body, like a man from the tribe of Shanuah. I saw Jesus, peace be upon him, from all those I have seen, Urwah, the son of

Masood is closest in resemblance to him. I saw Abraham, peace be upon him, and from all those I have seen I most resemble him. "

The Prophet's ﷺ Face

His complexion has been described as being somewhat delicately wheaten in color or whitish with reddish tones. His face was luminous, almost round, but not round, and frequently compared to the beauty of the full moon when it reached its zenith.

He had a broad forehead and his eyebrows were separate and thick with densely fine hair. When the Prophet ﷺ became displeased a vein between his eyebrows became enlarged. His eyes were jet-black and his eyelashes long, mascared with kohl made from ithmid that he applied thrice to each eye before sleeping.

His nose was prominently distinguished. His cheeks were smooth and well covered whilst his proportionally perfect mouth was neither large nor yet small. His teeth were bright, and evenly spaced, however, the space between his front teeth was slightly larger. As for the thickness of his beard, it was dense.

His hair was slightly wavy, sometimes it was cut short and at other times he wore it nearly shoulder length. When his hair had the tendency to part itself in the middle he wore it that way, otherwise he did not dress it in that fashion. His habit was to use oil on his hair and in order not to soil his turban he would place a piece of cloth between it and his hair. When he was on pilgrimage to Mecca, he would shave his hair.

The Prophet ﷺ would dress his hair and his beard using his right hand. It was not his practice to dress his hair every day, in fact, he prohibited it, unless there was a valid reason, and would dress his hair every third day.

In later life, the Prophet ﷺ had several silver hairs on his temples. It has been reported that they ranged between fourteen and twenty. The accuracy of these reports is equally valid as they came over a period of time. One day, when Abu Bakr first noticed the silver hairs, he said, "O Messenger of Allah, you have become old," whereupon the Prophet ﷺ said, "The recitation of the chapters Hud, Waki'ah, Mursalat, Amma and Kukkirah have made me old."

The Prophet's ﷺ Neck, Shoulders, Seal and Torso

The Prophet ﷺ had well-covered broad shoulders and between them lay the Seal of his prophethood. The seal was a piece of raised flesh approximately the size of a pigeon's egg surrounded by hair.

Between his broad chest and navel grew a fine line of hair, as for his bones they were large and well proportioned. He was a man of medium stature, neither thin nor fat.

The Prophet's ﷺ Feet

The soles of his feet were fully fleshed whereas his heels were slim.

The Prophet's ﷺ Manner of Walking

There are those who are of the opinion that he walked at a fast pace, whilst others say it means he leaned forward a little as he walked; and the third opinion is that he lifted his leg forcefully. We also learn that he walked briskly and took long strides rather than short ones. We do know that he never walked haughtily with his chest puffed out with pride, nor did he scuff his feet as he walked.

The Prophet's ﷺ Manner of Looking

There are two hadith one of which says it was his custom to always look down towards the ground, and the other says that he gazed up towards the sky. The Prophetic quotations do no contradict one another as the Prophet ﷺ in day-to-day affairs, modestly looked towards the ground whereas when he awaited a Revelation he would look towards to sky. He never stared at anything.

The Prophet's ﷺ Height

It has been reported that he was a little taller than the average man, however, when he was amongst tall people his height was miraculous altered so that he became taller than those in his company.

The Prophet's ﷺ Age

Concerning his age scholars of Islam are of the opinion that there is a difference of opinion because some companions did not count the year he was born and the year he died. The consensus is that he was sixty-three years old when he was laid to rest.

The Prophet's ﷺ Bathing

None of the wives of the Prophet ﷺ and his family, saw his private parts, neither did he see theirs.

The Prophet's ﷺ Communication

When the Prophet ﷺ spoke to anyone, he would not just turn his face in order to converse, rather, he would either turn his whole body towards that person, or turn his face and torso in order to speak to the person directly; he was not proud man. It was not his practice to glance to the side when he spoke with anyone. His speech was deliberate and clear so that those sitting in his blessed company would remember what he said. When he wished to stress a point, he would repeat it three times.
It was not his custom to indulge in frivolous talk.

The Prophet's ﷺ Manner of Leaning

Prophet ﷺ would lean against a pillow placed on his left side, however, he never leaned against anything whilst eating.

During his last illness, Fadl entered his room and found him wearing a yellow band around his forehead. After they had exchanged greetings he asked Fadl to tighten the band around his noble head, which he did. Then, he sat up and stood up supporting himself on Fadl's shoulder and entered the Mosque.

When the Messenger of Allah ﷺ was ill he would rest his head against one of his wives or companions. When he passed away, his head was leaning upon Lady Ayesha, may Allah be pleased with her.

The Prophet's ﷺ Eating and Drinking

He ate with his right hand and would lick his fingers clean thereby using less water because water was scarce. Sometimes he used three fingers, at others five.

He never ate food from a table because it was not of their culture, nor a small plate, nor did he eat pita type bread. He ate from a leather cloth and did not cut his meat with a knife, rather, he would bite off a piece and chew it.

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ drank from a large wooden cup with a metal lining. He also drank from a water-skin with a cleaned spout.

When the Prophet ﷺ drank from the water of Zamzam, he stood. However, on most occasions he sat. He advocated drinking in smallish sips rather than gulping down all at once. (This blessed advice not to drink in one gulp is now proven to be detrimental to the liver and stomach).

The Prophet's ﷺ Bread and Food

The Prophet's bread was made from stone ground whole barley flour, which has a coarse texture and also whole wheat flour. A sieve was never used to refine the flour therefore large particles of grain often remained which were extracted. As for the quantity of bread, there was never sufficient bread in his household with which to fill his stomach.

Many a night he and his family would go to bed without having eaten because there was no food. It was the custom of the Holy Family to give away their food to those in need, seeking a reward from Allah, the Most High.

He advocated the use of olive oil not only for cooking but for massage. He also used vinegar and would eat the meat of fowl. He ate honey, the meat of goat and lamb with a preference for the meat of a shoulder of lamb.

Amongst the other things he ate were dates. One day the Prophet ﷺ found some dates that had fallen on the ground. He told his Companions he would have eaten them if he could have been sure they were not originally intended to be given in charity, for it is forbidden that he or his family should eat from charity. He also ate cucumber and water-melon with dates. Dates were also soaked in water to provide a sweet drink, however, they were never left long enough to ferment.

The Prophet ﷺ would drink water and milk. Lady Ayesha, may Allah be pleased with her, said that he liked a drink that was cold and sweet. When he was given milk he would supplicate saying, "O Allah, grant us blessing in it and increase it for us." He also told his Companions that there is nothing that serves both as food and water other than milk.

It was the custom of the Prophet ﷺ to feed his Companions before he, himself ate.

The Prophet's ﷺ Manner before and after Eating

The Prophet ﷺ always said, "Bismillah" before he ate. He always ate with his right hand and would eat from the portion of food in front of him. After he finished eating he would thank Allah saying, "Praise be to Allah who fed us, and given us drink, and made us Muslims."

The Prophet's ﷺ Sleeping

Before he slept, the Prophet ﷺ would lay down on his right side and supplicate, "O Allah, in Your Name I live and die." When he awoke he would supplicate, "Praise be to Allah, who restored to us life, having caused us to die and to Him shall be the Resurrection."

Lady Ayesha, may Allah be pleased with her, reported that before the Prophet ﷺ slept he would cup his hands together, blow on them then recite the chapters Al Ikhlas, Al Falak, and An Nas then wipe his hands over the parts of his body he could reach, this he did three times starting with the head, then his face, followed by the front part of his body.

The Prophet's ﷺ Weeping

As previously explained, everything our beloved Prophet ﷺ did was out of humility, sincerity and love of Allah as well as seeking mercy for us. His crying was the same.

One day Abdullah, the son of Masood, was asked by the Prophet ﷺ to recite some of the Koran to him, whereupon Abdullah asked, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ should I recite it to you when it has been sent down to you?" The Prophet ﷺ said, "I love to hear it from another person." So Abdullah started to recite the chapter "Nisa" When he reached the verse 41 *'How then shall it be when We bring forward from every nation a witness, and bring you to witness against those!'* tears flowed from both the Prophet's eyes.

Upon the death of one of the Prophet's daughters, Barakah, the longtime maid of the Prophet ﷺ who was with him when his mother died, started to weep loudly. The Prophet ﷺ drew her attention to it, for uncontrolled weeping is forbidden. Whereupon she said, "Do I not see you crying?" he replied, "This crying is not prohibited, it is a mercy from Allah." Then he said, "A Muslim is at peace at all times, even when his soul is being taken away, he is busy uttering the praise of Allah."

A Taste of the Prophet's ﷺ Humility and Blessed Character

Allah, Himself testifies to the magnitude of the Prophet's character in the chapter "The Pen" verse 4 *'Indeed, you are upon a mighty morality.'*
The Prophet ﷺ never disdained to visit the sick, attend funerals or ride a donkey. He would accept invitations, even the invitation of those in servitude, such was his manner that he would never refer to them as "slaves" but rather as being "youths" and so placate their heart.

The Prophet ﷺ never hesitated to accept the invitation of the poor; even when they served bread and rancid butter, he neither refused nor offended them.

Our beloved Prophet disliked it if any one stood up when he entered.
When the Prophet ﷺ entered his house he would divide his time into three portions, one portion for Allah, another for his family, and the other for himself, yet from his own portion he would give half of his time to his close Companions who would visit him and ask questions, convey messages or requests from others. He taught his close Companions things which were beneficial for his entire nation and told them to convey whatsoever he taught them, and encouraged them to ask on behalf of those less able to present their question, and never withheld a reply. He never wasted time listening to gossip, but as a matter of etiquette he would join in the conversation of his Companions, no matter if they were speaking about religious or worldly affairs.

Lady Ayesha, may Allah be pleased with her, said that the Prophet ﷺ never hit anyone except in Jihad. Neither did he hit women.

The Prophet ﷺ respected and honored those who were respected and honored in their nation. He warned them of the punishment of Allah, mediated between people, praised and encouraged good deeds. He explained the harmful effects of bad things, removed and prevented them.

The Prophet ﷺ followed the middle course in all matters and never neglected to guide his followers. He was always truthful, and when he spoke to anyone that person felt the most honored.

When the Prophet ﷺ was asked for something, he never refused, and when he had nothing to give he would speak with kind words to the asker. The Prophet ﷺ never refused to answer the question of a traveler and would say, "When you see someone in need, help them."

When someone joined the Prophet ﷺ for any reason he would remain seated until that person left. His endearing disposition was not just for a few, but for everyone, he was like a father to them.

The Prophet ﷺ never thought it to be beneath him to mend his clothes nor help with the daily chores, and was always kind to children and would ask Allah to bless them.

It was not the Prophet's custom to concern himself with idle conversation nor yet to interrupt when someone was speaking. His gatherings were full of knowledge, modesty, patience and honesty. He neither degraded nor disgraced anyone. If someone had sinned, it was not made public. Little ones were loved, the needy given preference whilst strangers and travelers were cared for.

Those in the household of the Prophet ﷺ loved him dearly, not once did he rebuke them for not having done a certain thing, nor did he ever ask why someone had done such a thing. He never used obscene language, nor did he shout and talk in the bazaars. It was not his way to avenge a bad deed with a similar deed, rather, he would forgive it and it would not be mentioned thereafter. He never sought faults in anyone.

Everyone received their rights, whether they were Muslims or non-Muslims. Even the unbelievers of Mecca testified to the honesty of the Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet ﷺ was never short-tempered, nor did he humiliate anyone. He always greatly appreciated the blessings of Allah no matter whether they were small or great. He did not criticize his food, nor over-praise it.

The Prophet ﷺ never became angered over any materialistic matter. When someone exceeded the limits in religious matters or against the truth, he became angry in a way that no one could endure, and turned away. He either forgave the offender or paid no attention to him.

When the Prophet ﷺ was happy, it was as if he almost closed his eyes, as for his laugh, it was for the most part a smile in which his blessed front teeth glittered like shining white hailstones.

When the Prophet ﷺ gestured towards something he would do so with his hand rather than by just pointing with one finger. The scholars say that this was yet another act of his humility as he would raise one finger as reference to Allah.

When the Prophet ﷺ was surprised by something he would turn his hand. He often spoke and used his hands. Sometimes he would hit the palm of his right hand with the underside of his left thumb.

There was a time when the Companions went to the Messenger of Allah ﷺ complaining of their severe pangs of hunger and showed him the stones they had strapped against their stomach to stop it from swelling whereupon the Prophet ﷺ showed them the two stones strapped to his.

The Prophet's gentleness overcame his anger and the more foolish a person acted towards him, the more patient he became.

The Prophet's ﷺ Bed

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ slept upon a hard leather mattress stuffed with the fiber of palm trees. The mattress was so hard that the palm fiber marks left welt marks upon his blessed body when he arose.

The Prophet's ﷺ Toothbrush

The Prophet ﷺ would clean his teeth with the splayed end of a miswaak twig.

The Prophet's ﷺ Natural Fragrance and Use of Perfume

The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was blessed with a natural fragrance quite unlike any other in the world. It has been described as being more fragrant than either amber or musk. Such was its sweetness that when he perspired, his wives collected his perspiration and used it to perfume themselves.

The Prophet's ﷺ Shoes

The Prophet ﷺ wore sandals with leather soles and two straps.

The Prophet's ﷺ Ring

The Prophet ﷺ had a silver ring with a gemstone from Abyssinia which he used as a seal.

When Islam started to spread and the Prophet ﷺ began to write letters of invitation to Islam to the Emperor of Rome, the King of Persia, and so on, he was informed that none of these heads of state would accept a letter unless it bore a seal. The ring was made in either the 6th or 7th year after his migration to Medina.

The Prophet's ring was inscribed on three lines, the first inscription read "Muhammad", the second "Messenger" and the third "Allah".

The Prophet's ﷺ Fast

Other than the obligatory fast of Ramadan, the Prophet ﷺ observed voluntary fasts. Lady Ayesha, may Allah be pleased with her, said that after the migration to Medina the Prophet ﷺ did not fast an entire month except for the month of Ramadan. She also says in another Prophetic quotation that he would fast most of the month of Shaban.

We are also told the Prophet ﷺ would fast some days of a month and none at all in another. Of the days he is known to have fasted Monday and Thursday received his special attention. Lady Ayesha, may Allah be pleased with her, reported the Prophet ﷺ saying, "I was born on a Monday, and the sending down of the Koran commenced on a Monday." Abu Hurayrah, said that the Prophet ﷺ said, "Deeds are presented (to Allah, the Most High) on Mondays and Thursday. I desire that my deeds be presented whilst I am fasting."

Lady Ayesha, may Allah be pleased with her, said, "Some months he would fast on Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays, whereas in other months he would fast on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays." She also said that the Prophet ﷺ did not fast on specific days, but whenever suitable. Abdullah, the son of Masood reported that he seldom fasted on a Friday.

The Prophet ﷺ would also fast on the 13th, 14th and 15th day of the Islamic month, also on the tenth of Muharram and the 10th of Thul Hijjah. After the Prophet's migration he observed some Jews observing the fast on the tenth of Muharram, which is the fast of Ashura. He asked them why they were fasting and was told that it was the day on which Allah, the Most High, saved Prophet Moses, peace be upon him, from Pharaoh, and that it was also the day on which Allah, the Most High, drowned Pharaoh. The Jews told the Prophet ﷺ that Prophet Moses, peace be upon him, would fast that day out of gratitude and happiness thereupon our beloved Prophet ﷺ said, "We are

more entitled than you to follow Moses, peace be upon him." Thereafter the Prophet ﷺ ordered his followers to fast on that day. This fast was obligatory until the command came to fast the month of Ramadan, thereafter the Prophet ﷺ said it was voluntary. To distance the Islamic fast of Ashura from that of the Jews, the Prophet ﷺ would fast either the day before Ashura, or the day after as well as the day of Ashura itself.

The Prophet's ﷺ Worship

Everything our beloved Prophet ﷺ did was an act of worship, and the following are but a few of the numerous examples.

Although he was absolutely sinless and promised the highest rank in Paradise, a rank in which no other prophet has attained, it did not prevent him from offering a magnitude of voluntary prayers.

Our beloved Prophet ﷺ would offer such long prayers that his legs became swollen. Lady Ayesha asked him why he offered such lengthy prayers when Allah had forgiven him all his sins. The Prophet ﷺ replied, "Should I not be a grateful worshipper?"

It was the Prophet's practice to sleep after the Isha prayer for the first portion of the night, then awake to offer his voluntary prayers until the time one would take breakfast before fasting. At that time he would offer the last prayer of the night, which is the Witr prayer. Then, the Prophet ﷺ would return to his apartment and sleep until the call for the Dawn prayer was made, when he would make either the major or minor ablution in readiness for the prayer.

The voluntary night prayers of the Prophet ﷺ would commence with two short units of prayer followed by very long units of prayer that varied in number. Sometimes he would offer ten units of prayer followed by the Witr making a total of thirteen -- this number was never exceeded -- then other times he would offer eight units of prayer followed by the Witr prayer.

Whenever the Prophet ﷺ was unable to offer his prayer during the night, Lady Ayesha, may Allah be pleased with her, said that he would offer twelve units of prayer before mid-day. She also commented that he offered his prayers in the most perfect manner.

There was a time when Lady Ayesha, may Allah be pleased with her, asked, "O Messenger of Allah ﷺ do you sleep before you offer Witr?" He replied, "O Ayesha, my eyes sleep, but my heart remains awake." This blessed state is a special gift bestowed upon the prophets.

During Ramadan the Prophet ﷺ would offer many of the Taraweeh prayers in the Mosque, and told his Companions that those who stand with sincere faith and hope in prayer during the Night of Honor (Al Qadr) will have their sins forgiven. When he did not offer his Taraweeh prayer with the congregation he would offer them at home.

When he was ill, the Prophet ﷺ would offer his prayer sitting down until between thirty and forty verses remained when he would stand and recite them, then he would bow and prostrate, he did the same in the second unit of prayer.

Omar reports having offered two units of prayer before and after the mid-day prayer, and two units of prayer after the evening prayer and two units of prayer after the night prayer with the Prophet ﷺ.

The Prophet's ﷺ Recitation of the Holy Koran

Lady Umm Salamah, may Allah be pleased with her, said, "He recited every word separately and distinctly." She also said, "He recited: 'Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds' and paused, then recited, 'the Merciful, the Most Merciful and paused. The Prophet ﷺ paused again after 'Owner of the Day of Recompense.'"

When Lady Ayesha, may Allah be pleased with her, was asked whether the Prophet ﷺ recited softly or audibly, she replied that he recited both ways.

One day Umm Hani who lived in Mecca, said she heard the recitation of the Prophet ﷺ from the roof-top of her house. Scholars say this was due to the stillness of the night when the voice travels further.

When the Prophet ﷺ opened Mecca, he rode his camel, Kaswa, reciting the following verses repeatedly, 'Indeed We have opened for you a clear opening, that Allah forgives your past and future sin, and completes His Favor to you, and guides you on a Straight Path.' (48:1-2). Muawiyah, the son of Korrah, who was one of the narrators of this Prophetic Quotation said

that if he had not feared that people would surround him, he would have recited it in the same tone.

The Companion, Katadah, said that Allah gave every one of His prophets a beautiful feature and a beautiful voice, and that our Prophet ﷺ had both beautiful features and voice, but he did not recite in a melodious tone as is the custom of singers.

Conclusion

All those blessed to see Prophet Muhammad ﷺ could only describe his noble, blessed features by saying, "I have not seen anyone like the Messenger of Allah ﷺ neither before nor after him." Therefore, it is impossible for us in this day and age to comprehend the magnitude of his beauty, either physically or inwardly.

By attempting to mirror his ways there are tremendous blessings which are rich in reward.

May Allah praise and venerate our beloved Prophet Muhammad, the best of His creation.